

and thin the forest through the removal of trees, some of this pain and suffering might have been avoided.

While it is the Forest Service's duty to manage the lands entrusted to them, we in the Congress also must take some blame. It seems that we have forgotten to provide the leadership the agency needs to understand our expectation of them.

This is not new. Many of us have stood on this floor and many experts have spoken on the issue of forest health for a decade—whether it is the lower Sierras or the San Bernardino or the forests of Idaho or all of the Great Basin region of the West. We have 190 million acres now of dead and dying forests. The great tragedy is that California, with the Santa Ana winds that come this time of year, set up the perfect scenario, and now the great tragedy is hitting.

This Congress has to deal with the issue. Senator FEINSTEIN has been on the Senate floor working with it. She and I have worked together with the appropriate committees—the Agriculture Committee, and my colleague, MIKE CRAPO, Senator COCHRAN, Senator DOMENICI—we have all come together to try to solve this problem. We have a solution and it is H.R. 1904, and it is a positive step forward.

It is now time for this Senate to debate this bill, vote it up or down. I see my colleague from California on the floor. I turn to her and most sincerely say, Mr. President, I express great sadness and sorrow for the tragedy now underway in her State. I wish it was over. But the firestorm that is sweeping across southern California today will only die with the winds and when we begin a positive effort at restoring the health of our natural lands and forested areas.

LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ACT OF 2003

Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the need for hate crimes legislation. On May 1, 2003, Senator KENNEDY and I introduced the Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act, a bill that would add new categories to current hate crimes law, sending a signal that violence of any kind is unacceptable in our society.

On March 17, 1999, Murietta, CA, resident Randy Bowen, who is black, was attacked at a party in the Lake Skinner Hills. Bowen's two white assailants were self-proclaimed white supremacists. They first hit Bowen in the head with a bottle and, when he fled, slashed his back using a straight razor. Both men were found guilty of committing a hate crime.

I believe that Government's first duty is to defend its citizens, to defend them against the harms that come out of hate. The Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act is a symbol that can become substance. I believe that by passing this legislation and changing current law, we can change hearts and minds as well.

THE MENTALLY ILL OFFENDER TREATMENT AND CRIME REDUC- TION ACT OF 2003

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, the Mentally Ill Offender Treatment and Crime Reduction Act is a good bipartisan bill that would help State and local governments deal effectively with a serious law enforcement and mental health problem—the extent to which mentally ill individuals commit crimes and recidivate without ever receiving appropriate attention from the mental health, law enforcement, or corrections systems. I am pleased that the bill passed the Judiciary Committee unanimously last week, and the Senate unanimously last night.

I have enjoyed working on this bill with Senator DEWINE, who has shown commitment and leadership on this issue. I am also pleased that Senators CANTWELL, DOMENICI, DURBIN, GRASSLEY, and HATCH have joined Senator DEWINE and I as cosponsors of this bill.

The issues this bill addresses have received increasing attention of late. For example, Human Rights Watch released a report just last week discussing the fact “that jails and prisons have become the Nation's default mental health system.” The first recommendation in the report was for Congress to enact this bill.

All too often, people with mental illness rotate repeatedly between the criminal justice system and the streets of our communities, committing a series of minor offenses. The ever scarcer time of our law enforcement officers is being occupied by these offenders who divert them from more urgent responsibilities. Meanwhile, offenders find themselves in prisons or jails, where little or no appropriate medical care is available for them. This bill gives State and local governments the tools to break this cycle, for the good of law enforcement, corrections officers, the public safety, and mentally ill offenders themselves.

I held a Judiciary Committee hearing last June on the criminal justice system and mentally ill offenders. At that hearing, we heard from State mental health officials, law enforcement officers, corrections officials, and the representative of counties around our Nation. All of our witnesses agreed that people with untreated mental illness are more likely to commit crimes, and that our State mental health systems, prisons, and jails do not have the resources they need to treat the mentally ill, and prevent crime and recidivism. We know that more than 16 percent of adults incarcerated in U.S. jails and prisons have a mental illness, that about 20 percent of youth in the juvenile justice system have serious mental health problems, and that up to 40 percent of adults who suffer from a serious mental illness will come into contact with the American criminal justice system at some point in their lives. We know these things, but we have not done enough about them at the Federal level, and our State and local officials need our help.

The bill does not mandate a “one size fits all” approach to addressing this issue. Rather, it allows grantees to use the funding authorized under the bill for mental health courts or other court-based programs, for training for criminal justice and mental health system personnel, and for better mental health treatment in our communities and within the corrections system. The funding is also generous enough to make a real difference, with \$100 million authorized for each of the next two fiscal years. This is an area where government spending can not only do good but can also save money in the long run—a dollar spent today to get mentally ill offenders effective medical care can save many dollars in law enforcement costs in the long run.

This bill has brought law enforcement officers and mental health professionals together, as we have seen at both of the hearings the committee has held on this issue.

Now that we have passed this bill, I would hope the Senate could turn its attention to S. 486, the Paul Wellstone Mental Health Equitable Treatment Act. Senators DOMENICI and KENNEDY introduced this bill in February and it has 66 cosponsors. It would provide for equal insurance coverage for mental health benefits, and would do a great deal to accomplish some of the same objectives we seek to achieve through this bill. I would hope that we could find an hour in the time we have remaining in this session to debate and pass this bipartisan and broadly supported bill.

AUTHORITARIANISM IN RUSSIA

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, the arrest of Russian businessman Mikhail Khodorkovsky by Russian security agents last weekend is of grave consequence to U.S.-Russia relations. It caps a chilling and aggressive turn toward authoritarianism in Vladimir Putin's Russia. It is past time for all friends of Russia, and all who support strong U.S.-Russia relations, to speak out about the ascendant role of the Russian security services in the Kremlin, President Putin's suppression of free media, the government's politicized prosecutions of its opponents, continuing and grievous human rights violations at the hands of the Russian army in Chechnya, and increased Russian meddling, intimidation, and harassment of its sovereign neighbors. American policy must change dramatically as a result of these developments, which have been in evidence for several years, for there can be no stability in U.S.-Russia relations, to say nothing of any strategic partnership, as long as Russia is moving away from the values of freedom and democratic progress so many Russians celebrated when the Soviet Union fell 12 years ago. I will have more to say on this matter, but for the moment I wish to draw my colleagues' attention to an incisive opinion article by Bruce Jackson entitled “The Failure of Putin's Russia,” published today